1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

pressed. Two contingents of Sikhs were sent unsuccessfully to take Kawinga's fortress in Chikala in 1894; Makanjira was defeated in 1894, Kawinga, Jalasi, Matipwiri, and Tambala in 1896.[1] They were later allowed to return, but they were not recognized as chiefs by the Administration.

The end of tribal wars and of slave-raids made large defensive settlements unnecessary, and the peace saw the splitting up of communities, which rendered the task of the Administration more difficult. The abolition of domestic slavery, by reducing the power of headmen, further contributed to the tendency to live in small scattered settlements. In 1912 the Nyasaland District Administration Ordinance was passed with the object of concentrating the villages into larger communities.

The first movement of Yao from Portuguese East Africa to Masasi took place about the end of the 1850's. According to one account they were originally expelled from the territory between Mataka's and Unangu by the Maseko Ngoni.[2] Then the Makua attacked them, breaking up the tribe still more, so that they migrated north to Masasi, the south-west of the Makonde plateau, and the banks of the lower Ruvuma. At Masasi they were again attacked by Ngoni, but defeated them, and then retired to the Makonde plateau, where they were again attacked by Ngoni. There is a tradition that at some time after 1850 the region was toured by an emissary of the Sultan of Zanzibar, 'Bakiri', who gave the whole country to Matola, a Yao chief, to rule from Newala. In the area between Masasi and the Ruvuma river the Yao are in a majority and politically supreme over their neighbours the Makonde, Makua, Ngindo, Matambwe, and Ndonde.[3] At Mtua, on the Makondi plateau, there is a settlement of Yao who were rescued from the Ngoni on the east shore of Lake Nyasa by Captain Engelhardt, and transferred there. These in outward appearance could hardly be distinguished from the Swahili of the coast.[4]

Demography

The Yao population of Nyasaland has increased steadily but its relation to the total population has not increased:

1921		1931		1945	
Yao population	*Percentage of total population*	*Yao population*	*Percentage of total population*	*Yao population*	*Percentage of total population*
185,363	15·4	246,713	15·6	281,177	13·74

Even in the predominantly Yao areas the population is not homogeneous, either tribally or linguistically. In the three areas in which there are a large number of Yao (Kawinga and Liwonde of Zomba district and Nyambi of Fort Johnston), they represent roughly 48·6, 75, and 73 per cent. of the total population, the next most important section being *Nguru* (Lomwe) immigrants from Portuguese East Africa.[5] Some Nguru call themselves Yao when questioned.

The density in these areas is respectively 65·5, 32, and 52 per square mile.[6] This

[1] Codrington, 1898, p. 320; Maughan, 2, 1905, pp. 86, 120-6, 132-3; Schanz, 1893, p. 422.
[2] Livingstone, 1874, p. 72.
[3] Weule, 1909, pp. 128-46.
[4] Ibid. p. 48.
[5] Mitchell and Census, 1926, 1931, and 1945.
[6] 1945 Census.

1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

162. relatively close settlement should be contrasted with conditions 60 years ago, when villages consisted of from 10 to 20 huts, with an average population of 100.[1] The size of villages now ranges from a few huts to 60 or more, with a total average population of about 40 per village, ranging from 15 to 200.

From a sample taken from three groups of hamlets in Liwonde district, it appears that the average gross reproduction rate over the last ten years has been about 2·9, while the net reproduction rate was about 2·2.[2]

Statistics are not available for the Yao population of Portuguese Nyasaland. Livingstone noted that at Mtarika's on the upper Ruvuma (not the town now on the Lujenda but an older one) there was an immense population. Mataka's town had about 1,000 houses, and there were many villages around.[3] The Yao fastnesses at Unangu and Mtonya were also thickly populated.[4] In the barren country south of the Ruvuma, between its confluence with the Lujenda and the beginning of the Makondi plateau, the country was almost uninhabited.[5]

In Tanganyika the Yao are distributed as follows:[6]

District	*Total population*	*Total children*
Tunduru	32,761	13,315
Masasi	15,009	5,048
Kilwa	6,960	1,816
Lindi	6,415	1,574
Mikindani	1,914	483
Songea	7,350	2,879
Dar es Salaam	1,869	230
Rufiji	1,013	189
Tabora	1,919	520
Other districts	3,377	820
	78,599	26,674

Percentage children to adults	*Percentage males to females*		*Increase since*	
	Adult	*Children*	*1928*	*1921*
52	91	113	19,835	34,699

LINGUISTIC DATA

197. The Yao language is spoken over an area extending from near the east coast of Africa to the east shore of Lake Nyasa, and from the sources of the Ruvuma in the north to the Lujenda in the south.[7] There are also two small pockets of Yao who crossed the lake to the west side, who speak their own language.

Doke classifies it as one of the group of Bantu languages in the East Central Zone, which constitutes a bridge between the languages of the East and Central Zones. He

[1] Macdonald, 1882, p. 144.
[2] 1874, pp. 68, 72.
[3] Thompson, 1882.
[4] *Census of Native Population*, 1931, Table VI. There are also 4,832 people at Kilwa called Machinga, whose name indicates that they are probably of Yao origin.
[5] Hetherwick, 2, 1902, p. xviii.
[6] Mitchell, 4.
[7] Maples, 2, 3, 1883.

1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

Yao make square houses.[1] Panelled doors and glass windows, deck-chairs and palm furniture are becoming more and more popular. The men wear long Moslem robes and the women are clothed in cotton. In the rural areas there are usually a few craftsmen who still ply their trades as carpenters and blacksmiths, though the latter no longer smelt, but use scrap-iron.

Labour Migration

Statistics are not available for the Yao of Portuguese East Africa or Tanganyika Territory. Yao constitute 34 per cent. of the total population of South Nyasa district, 15 per cent. of upper Shire, 11 per cent. of Blantyre and Zomba.[2] The proportion of labour migrants in these districts was in 1937 as follows:[3]

District	*Adult males fit to work*	*Percentage of emigrants*	*Number producing economic crops*	*Number of subsistence producers*	*Emigrants not heard of since 1930*
South Nyasa .	24,230	27·1	2,912 (12%)	12,025 (49%)	873
Upper Shire .	24,673	15·9	2,555 (10%)	16,629 (67%)	255
Blantyre . .	25,330	15·6	3,788 (15%)	10,165 (40%)	986
Zomba . .	26,679	12·4	7,720 (29%)	9,040 (33%)	553

South Nyasa district, which is unfertile waterless bush with a long history of famine and food shortage, has the highest proportion of labour migrants. Upper Shire, though not fertile, is more prosperous, benefiting from the tobacco- and cotton-growing industries, and from the dried-fish trade.[4]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE[5]

Kinship and Local Grouping

Among the Yao succession is matrilineal and marriage mainly matrilocal. According to some informants succession formerly passed down the line of brothers, as with the Bemba, but it now passes direct to the eldest sister's eldest son, or to descendants of other sisters in order of seniority.[6] Chiefly succession follows the same rule, but the most senior may be set aside for a more suitable candidate.[7]

Clan names, *lukoryo*, are inherited matrilineally, and formerly designated exogamous units,[8] but the marriage prohibition has now ceased to operate. Holders of the same clan name are unable to trace descent from a common ancestress, and for commoners clan names seem to have quite lost their significance; they are, however, carefully remembered in the chiefly lines and in other lines of hereditary rank, such as village headmen.

Within the general kinship grouping of the clan, a smaller group is recognized,

[1] Werner, 1906, p. 144; Macdonald, 1882, vol. i, pp. 20–2, describes a round hut.

[2] 1931 Census information is taken because the district boundaries were changed between 1931 and 1945, so that the information in the 1945 Census would not be susceptible of comparison with that given in the 1937 Survey of Male Adult Population in the *Bell Report*, Appendix A.

[3] *Bell Report*, 1938, Appendix A. [4] Smith, 1937.

[5] Information, unless otherwise stated, is from Mitchell, and relates to south Nyasaland Yao.

[6] Johnston, 1897, p. 471; Meredith Sanderson, 1920, p. 370. *Cf.* Macdonald, 1882, vol. i, p. 187, who says that brothers inherit before sister's son.

[7] Ibid., p. 189. [8] Stannus, 4, 1922, p. 236.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

economic centre of Southern Nyasaland and much land has been alienated to Whites there. Liwonde area, which has only 30·7 to the square mile, has large parts that are unpopulated because of the lack of surface water on the escarpment of the Rift Valley. This population is by no means homogeneous, tribally or linguistically, but culturally the tribes are all very similar. The Yao, Nguru and Nyanja, who comprise most of the population, live in villages under village headmen; marry uxorilocally; have similar practices and beliefs in sorcery and disease. Table II

TABLE II

TRIBAL COMPOSITION OF THE CHIEFDOMS: 1945

Chiefdom	Total Population	Percentages of Tribes			
		Yao	Nguru	Nyanja	Ngoni
Jalasi	40,287	81·3	12·4	5·9	0·2
Nyambi	7335	73·2	26·8	0·0	0·0
Kawinga	44,789	48·7	35·7	14·4	1·2
Liwonde	12,176	75·2	19·6	5·2	0·1
Malemia	12,448	75·1	9·6	13·7	1·6

Sources: Nyasaland Census, 1945. Abstracted from the detailed returns at the District Commissioner's Offices at Zomba and Fort Johnston.

shows the tribal make-up of the five areas with which I am concerned. Three-quarters of the population in all these areas are Yao. In Kawinga area, in which non-Yao tribes are most numerous, only one-half of the people are Yao, but included in this area are the two Mpotola subordinate chieftains Ngokwe and Chikweo, whose followers are predominantly Nguru (42·7 and 55·7 per cent).[1] If we exclude these two chiefdoms, the proportion of Yao in the rest of Kawinga area is 55·6 per cent. Nyambi and Kawinga areas, lying as they do against the Portuguese East African boundary, have the greater proportion of Nguru. Within Kawinga area the concentration of the Nguru along the boundary is also shown. Chiwalo chiefdom, which lies to the west of Kawinga area, has only 15 per cent Nguru,

[1] It seems here that the Mpotola may have been enumerated as Nguru and Nyanja.

[text continues on p. 16]

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

slightly more than the extreme southerly chiefdoms, Mposa and Chamba. As we have seen, half the population of the two most easterly chiefdoms is Nguru.

The Nyanja are concentrated mostly along the Shire River banks and around the Lake Shirwa shores. Most in Kawinga are at the north end of the Lake Shirwa or in Mposa at Lake Shirwa [1] and, according to the census, in Ngokwe in the extreme north-east. It is possible that in Ngokwe some of the Mpotola have been enumerated as Nyanja.

Although my study was of the Yao, I cannot exclude these other ethnic groups from it. The specific percentages must not be considered as exact reflections of the tribal make-up in the area. Though the villages of the three main tribal groups tend to be distinct, and intermarriage is not as great as might be expected, there are increasing numbers of children of mixed tribal parentage. There is some value in the figures, but we must take into consideration the general political situation in these chiefdoms. I enlarge upon this theme later. Generally speaking, however, the Yao have come in as invaders, while most Nguru have come in as immigrants. The Yao have greater prestige both in the eyes of the Whites and in the general structure of the chiefdoms. Many Nguru therefore, who have been in this area for some time, have come to call themselves Yao if they are asked, especially by a White man. This is especially true of the Mpotola people where they are living under Yao chiefs. The Mpotola are technically Nguru but most have lost their own language and speak only Yao. The Administration did not classify the Mpotola as a separate tribe in the Census and it is difficult to decide whether they were included as Yao or Nguru. Most of the Mpotola headmen I have met in Yao chiefdoms have called themselves Yao until they were prevailed upon to qualify their claim. Allowing for some discrepancies in the figures, the table shows nevertheless that numerically the Yao outnumber any other tribe in the area. In general, the other tribes are members of the chiefdoms and take part in most of the social activities which occur within them. I outline later the position of their headmen in the general political structure, but I wish to set out here some general notes on the tribal background of the non-Yao groups.

The term Nguru is applied to a large group of people who call

[1] 32 per cent of the population in Mposa's area is Nyanja.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

When Livingstone passed the Lake in 1866 he found Mponda living in approximately the same place as his successor does to-day, and he mentioned that Kawinga was living on the west of Lake Malombe.[1] He also mentioned that the Machinga dominated the whole of this area, showing that by this time there had been considerable movement into it. When the Church of Scotland Mission was established at Blantyre in 1876, Duff MacDonald recorded that the disposition of the chiefs was as follows: Mlumbe to the north-west of Zomba; Kapeni near Blantyre at Sochi; Mpama at Chiradzulu; Kawinga at Chikala; Malemia on the south-west side of Mount Zomba, and the Matipwiri at Mount Mlanje.[2] These groups, except for Kawinga, still occupy the same positions to-day. At this time most of the movement into Nyasaland had ceased, and the Yao invaders had already set themselves up as rulers over the indigenous Nyanja. At the same time the Ngoni were making frequent forays into the Shire Highlands and the rest of Southern Nyasaland, so that the position was far from stable.

The distribution of the Yao to-day reflects the history of their movement into Nyasaland. The districts nearest and fanning out from the point of entry into Nyasaland, viz. the area due east of Fort Johnston, contain the largest proportion of Yao. The more distant the districts are, the smaller the proportion of Yao in them.

The Entry of the Missionaries

The Missionaries were the first Whites to settle in Nyasaland. When he was in Britain in 1858, Livingstone had recommended the Shire Highlands as a suitable place for the establishment of a Mission. Inspired by his reports, the Universities Mission to Central Africa was founded, and in 1861 Dr. Mackenzie was sent out to establish the Mission. It was an ill-starred venture.[3] From the sociological point of view its significance is that it

[1] Waller, *Last Journals*, 109.

[2] MacDonald, D., *Africana* or *The Heart of Heathen Africa*, Simpkin Marshall (London, 1882), i, 31.

[3] Rowley, H., *The Story of the Universities Mission to Central Africa, from its commencement under Bishop Mackenzie, to its Withdrawal from the Zambesi*, Saunders, Otley & Co. (London, 1886), and *Twenty Years in Central Africa*, Wells Gardner, Darton & Co. (London, 1889), 3rd Edition.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

is when it is used by an Administrative village headman, as I shall illustrate later, it will not serve a minor village headman much to move out of one chiefdom to another if his object is to become recognized as an Administrative village headman. If he goes to another chiefdom he is automatically regarded as one of the most junior of the headmen. If he goes to another chiefdom as an Administrative village headman already, he takes with him his 'book' and to some extent the rank associated with it.

The size of Administrative villages as measured by the number of tax-payers in them is about equal in all three categories of village headmen. Table X sets out the distribution. The

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION BY SIZE OF VILLAGES UNDER ABORIGINAL, INVADER AND NEWCOMER ADMINISTRATIVE HEADMEN

Tax-payers	Totals			Total	Percentages			Total
	Aborigines*	Invaders	Newcomers†		Aborigines	Invaders	Newcomers	
0–19	6	29	56	91	30·0	21·3	22·0	22·2
20–39	7	49	85	141	35·0	36·0	33·5	34·4
40–59	2	25	57	84	10·0	18·4	22·4	20·5
60–79	3	16	29	48	15·0	11·8	11·4	11·7
80–99	1	1	13	15	5·0	0·7	5·1	3·7
100–119	1	6	4	11	5·0	4·4	1·6	2·7
120–139	—	4	4	8	—	2·9	1·6	2·0
140–159	—	1	1	2	—	0·7	0·4	0·5
160–179	—	1	1	2	—	0·7	0·4	0·5
180–199	—	1	1	2	—	0·7	0·4	0·5
200–249	—	3	—	3	—	2·2	—	0·7
250–300	—	—	3	3	—	—	1·2	0·7
Totals .	20	136	254	410‡	100·0	99·8	100·0	100·1
Mean .	39·0	48·5	45·1	45·9				
S.E. .	8·7	4·2	2·8	2·2				

* Excludes one village whose size was unknown.
† Excludes 3 villages whose sizes were unknown.
‡ The total excludes an additional 10 villages for which full details were not recorded.

Administrative villages of the Aborigines, mostly Nyanja, appear to be rather smaller than those of the Invaders and Newcomers.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

There were only 20 villages in that sample and the difference may not be significant though the distribution is skewed to the smaller villages. The mean number of tax-payers under Invader village headmen was slightly larger than that under Newcomers, but the difference was not significant.[1] Among the Invaders are included the chiefs and *ndunas* who usually have villages of over 100 tax-payers. Smaller villages are less likely to break away from chiefs and *ndunas* than they are from Newcomers and less important men.

Village headmen may exploit their connections with the chief in their competition with their fellows for Government recognition. In Tables XI to XIV inclusive, I have used the material I collected in Mposa, Chamba, Chikweo and Ngokwe areas only, because I know that my survey did not include many headmen in Kawinga and Liwonde areas. The total in these tables includes both Administrative and non-Administrative village headmen. From Table XI it is clear that there is a

TABLE XI

PROPORTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE VILLAGE HEADMEN AMONG ALL VILLAGE HEADMEN OF THE THREE CATEGORIES IN CHIKWEO, NGOKWE, CHAMBA AND MPOSA AREAS

Type of Headman	Aborigines	Invaders	Newcomers	Total
Administrative . . .	12	61	77	150
Non-Administrative .	1	37	111	149
Total	13	98	188	299
% Admin. Headmen.	92·3	62·2	41·0	50·2

$n = 2$; $\chi^2 = 21{\cdot}34$; $p = 0{\cdot}00002$.

significantly greater proportion of headmen of Invader descent than headmen of Newcomer descent who are recognized as Administrative headmen.[2] The percentage of Aborigines who are Administrative headmen is highest of all but it is based on such a small number that not much value can be placed on it.

[1] Diff. of means = 3·4; S.E. of diff. = 4·5; C.R. = 0·76; $p = 0{\cdot}4472$.
[2] Diff. of per cent = 21·2; S.E. of diff. = 6·07; C.R. = 3·49; $p = 0{\cdot}00048$.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

TABLE XII

PROPORTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE VILLAGE HEADMEN AMONG ALL VILLAGE HEADMEN WHO ARE RELATED AND NOT RELATED TO THE CHIEF IN CHIKWBO, NGOKWE, CHAMBA AND MPOSA AREAS

Type of Headman	Relatives		Non-Relatives	Total
	Direct	Clan		
Administrative . . .	38	36	76	150
Non-Administrative .	16	24	109	149
Total	54	60	185	299
% Admin. Headmen.	70·4	60·0	41·1	50·2

$n = 2$; $\chi^2 = 17{\cdot}23$; $p = 0{\cdot}00018$.

Table XII shows that among the chief's direct relatives (i.e. those who can trace some direct link, matrilineally, patrilaterally or affinally to the chief) there are more Administrative headmen than among the relatives who are related only through clan links. Further, it shows that there are more Administrative headmen among the chief's relatives as a whole than among those headmen who are not related to him at all.

It seems probable also that village headmen have used their link to the chiefs through religion to prosecute their claims to rank. From Table XIII we see that there are more Moslem

TABLE XIII

PROPORTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEADMEN AMONG ALL VILLAGE HEADMEN OF THE SAME RELIGION AS, OR DIFFERENT RELIGION FROM, THAT OF THE CHIEF (ISLAM) IN CHIKWBO, NGOKWE, CHAMBA AND MPOSA AREAS

Type of Headman	Moslem	Christian	Pagan	Total
Administrative . . .	113	27	9	149
Non-Administrative .	93	31	21	145
Total	206	58	30	294*
% Admin. Headmen.	54·9	46·6	30·0	50·2

$n = 2$; $\chi^2 = 6{\cdot}97$; $p = 0{\cdot}03078$.

* Excludes 5 village headmen whose religion I did not record.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

Administrative headmen than either Christian or Pagan. The chiefs, of course, are all Moslem.

Lastly, the same trend is seen among those headmen who are of the same tribe as the chief, against those who are of other tribes (Table XIV). Here, however, the difference is so small

TABLE XIV

PROPORTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEADMEN AMONG ALL VILLAGE HEADMEN OF THE SAME TRIBE AS, OR DIFFERENT TRIBES FROM, THE CHIEF IN CHIKWEO, NGOKWE, CHAMBA AND MPOSA AREAS

Type of Headman	Same Tribe	Different Tribe	Total
Administrative	85	65	150
Non-Administrative	76	73	149
Total	161	138	299
% Administrative Headmen .	52·8	47·1	50·2

$n = 1$; $\chi^2 = 0{\cdot}95$; $p = 0{\cdot}3422$.

that it may easily have arisen by chance. These factors, however, do not operate independently. There are more co-tribesmen, co-religionists and relatives of the chief among the Invaders than among the other categories. In other words, the factors are all intercorrelated and it is possible to consider any particular factor as the independent variable. From the point of view of the people themselves, to be an Invader is to have one of the best claims on the chief to become an Administrative headman.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SCARLET HEADBAND

Government recognition therefore provides the means whereby headmen are ranked in two major categories. But Administrative village headmen themselves are ranked by a number of prestige-indicating characteristics. The most important of these are the right to wear a plain scarlet headband and the right to hold boys' and girls' initiation ceremonies.

Of these two additional marks of rank the more important is the right to wear the scarlet headband. This headband is wrapped round the head, turban fashion. Most village headmen wear a headband of some sort, either of white or coloured cloth,

6: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7

They do not form a representative sample though they were casually selected for study and are fairly well scattered in the district in which they are situated.

In all there were 762 men, women, and children normally resident in the hamlets. This represents about 1·2 per cent. of the total population of the area. By normally resident, I mean that these people are considered to be members of the hamlets, and if they were absent, were away on only short visits of, say, about a month.

I have thus counted polygynists as normal members of the hamlets, but have taken care to ensure that they were not included again if their second wives were in another hamlet of the groups studied. Men, women, and their children who had gone outside the area to seek work, for example, were not included.

The ages of all members of the population were estimated by relating the birth of the individual to some notable event, the date of which is known. In these hamlets it was always possible to find some old relative who could place the birth of younger people as occurring between notable events. After the two dates between which the birth occurred had been fixed, it was then possible to fix the date of birth more accurately by asking the older people to indicate the approximate size of the child at subsequent events, by picking out a suitably sized child in the village.

The following is the skeleton chronology used in this survey.

1870 Migration of Kawinga group from Kongwe Hill.
1881 First attack by the Makwangwara Angoni.
1884 Second attack by the Makwangwara Angoni.
1895 British attack on Mount Chikala, the stronghold of Kawinga.
1896 British attack on Mount Mangoche, the stronghold of Jalasi.
1905 Death of Kawinga of the Anthill.
1907 The departure of Mr. Hoare, Collector of Revenue, from the Chikala Station.
1908 Small-pox epidemic.
1913 Government regulations about the number of huts to a village (District Administration (Natives) Ordinance, 1912).
1914 Commencement of the First World War. This is a notable event because of the fighting in German East Africa, in which many Nyasaland African troops took part. Also many men were used as porters carrying war goods from the railhead to Fort Johnston on Lake Nyasa.
1918 End of First World War.
1919 Influenza epidemic.
1921 General famine. This is known locally as *sala sa Jim*, lit. 'the hunger of Jim'. Jim was an African Government clerk whose duty it was to dispense food to the starving populace.
1930 The coming of the famous *mchape* witchfinders. These people, trading on the beliefs of the population, induced practically the entire people to drink a potion to protect themselves from witchcraft. It is a most memorable event in the history of the area.[1]
1933 The introduction of Indirect Rule.
1940 The commencement of recruiting for the Second World War. The Liwonde district supplied a good proportion of men for the Army.
1946 End of the Second World War, i.e. the return of the soldiers.

The important thing about such a chronology is that the events should be deeply

[1] For details of this movement when it had penetrated to Northern Rhodesia, see A. I. Richards, 'A Modern Movement of Witchfinders', *Africa*, vol. viii (1935), pp. 448–61.

6: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7

They are semi-subsistence cultivators who own no cattle and whose diet is therefore largely vegetarian, viz. sorghum and maize-meal with ground-nuts and beans and certain leaves together with a small quantity of cassava roots.

Marriages are contracted early in life with little difficulty and ceremony. Formerly girls were espoused as mere children, and this still happens, but whether the custom is falling away or not I could not check quantitatively because the memories of the old women who had been married as children forty or fifty years ago could not be relied upon. Table I shows the ages at first marriage for a sample of 121 married women for whom this information was available.

Where marriage takes place so early we can expect that the mean age when child-bearing commences will also be early. Table II shows the median age of mothers at the birth of their first child.

TABLE II. *Age of Mother at Birth of First child*

Present age-groups of mothers	*Age of mother at birth of first child*									*Total*	*Median age at birth of first child*
	12½–15	*15–17*	*17½–20*	*20–22½*	*22½–25*	*25–27½*	*27½–30*	*30–32½*	*Over 32½*		
Under 30	9	26	12	17	6	4	..	..	..	74	17·9
30–45	10	14	10	9	4	7	3	4	3	66	19·8
Over 45	3	7	9	9	3	6	1	3	1	46	20·6
Totals	24	47	31	35	13	17	6	7	4	186	19·3

From these two tables it is clear that nearly all women in the community are married early and that child-bearing commences very soon after marriage.

Table III shows the conjugal status of all women over the age of 15.

TABLE III. *Conjugal Status of all Women over the Age of 15*

Present age-groups	*Never married*	*Wives of*			*Divorcees*	*Widows*	*Total*
		Monogynists	*Polygynists*	*Labour migrants*			
Under 20	23	15	3	4	..	..	45
20–30	3	37	18	9	9	3	79
30–45	1	31	19	3	9	3	70
Over 45	..	14	10	1	11	16	52
Total	27	97	50	19	29	24	246

Here we see that of all women under 45 (194), 141 (73 per cent.) are married, though only 83 (43 per cent.), i.e. the wives of monogynists, have their husbands living permanently with them. Another 40 (20 per cent.) were married to men who were married to other wives, so that while their husbands were not living with them permanently they were nevertheless with them periodically. Eighteen other women (9 per cent.) were married to men who had left to work outside the area and hence were not living with their wives at all at the time of the survey. Visits by men to places of work outside the area may last 2 years or more. It should

IT SHOULD
be noted that only 27—11 per cent. of the whole sample of 246 women—had never married and that 23, 80 per cent., of these (or 10 per cent. of the total) were under the age of 20 and therefore stood a good chance of yet marrying. Furthermore, 2 of the 4 women over 20 who had not married were known definitely to be incapable of marrying (one is insane and the other has violent epileptic fits).

There were 33 women who were divorcees or widows (21·5 per cent.), but it should be noted that 27 (or 11 per cent. of the 246 women) were over the age of 45 and therefore were past, or nearly past, the child-bearing period. Those in the younger age-groups stood good chances of remarrying. Table IV shows that though the divorce rate is high[1] remarriage is common. By the time a woman's child-bearing period has ended she has been married on the average 1·7 times. Few marriages are contracted after child-bearing ceases.

TABLE IV. *Marriages and Dissolutions of Marriage experienced by all Women over the Age of 15*

Present age	*No. of women*	*No. of marriages contracted*	*No. of divorces experienced*	*No. widowed*	*No. still married*	*No. of marriages per woman*	*No. of divorces per woman*	*No. of marriages per woman ended by death of husband*	*No. of marriages per woman still existing*
15–20	45	22	1	..	21	0·49	0·02	0·00	0·46
20–30	79	104	56	4	64	1·32	0·45	0·05	0·81
30–45	70	121	30	16	55	1·73	0·71	0·23	0·79
Over 45	52	88	19	34	23	1·70	0·37	0·65	0·48
Total	246	333	116	54	163	1·36	0·47	0·22	0·67

These statistics, showing the early age of marriage, the early commencement of child-bearing, the high incidence of marriage among women, and the high rate of remarriage during the child-bearing period, all point to the high valuation of reproduction reflected in Yao culture. This is consistent with their social structure, where the major corporate groups are kinship groups and reproduction is the principal method of recruitment to the group. Furthermore, because the standard of living is almost at subsistence level, children do not entail the economic losses they do in Western society. On the other hand, they are expected to support their aged parents when they themselves are economically independent. In other words, there are few factors militating against reproduction and many in favour of it.

We may expect the beliefs and customs surrounding child-birth to reflect the value of reproduction. For instance, the Yao distinguish clearly between women who have borne children and those who have not. When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time she undergoes a special ceremony (*litido*) attended only by women who have borne children. This ceremony has many of the features of a *rite de passage* and appears to mark the passing of the woman to a new social status. Furthermore, women are ascribed status according to the number of children they have borne. The word *awuali* signifies a young woman who has not yet borne a child; *awuali*

[1] Between a third and a half of the marriages contracted by women had been dissolved by divorce by the time that the child-bearing period had ended.

6: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7

844 believe that she will die. The man's representatives are therefore able to establish the child's paternity from the birth-pang confessions of the woman.

846 The child is kept in the hut where it was born, for six or seven days, while the [553] umbilical cord dries and falls off. During this time (*lunli*) the child is unnamed, and it is named only when it is taken out of the hut. Should it die during this period of seclusion it remains unnamed and is referred to by a special term (*litaya*, pl. *matuya*). [128] I have therefore been able to enumerate live births by means of the distinction made between miscarriages and still-births (*kwasanga*) and children who lived long enough to be referred to as *matuya*. After the birth of the child the woman may not have 846 intercourse for four or five months. To do so would be to endanger the life of the [854] child with a disease called *ndaka*,[1] which is contracted by a sexually inactive person 834 when he comes into contact with a sexually active person. The husband may have intercourse with a second wife, but must take care to medicate himself so that he does not endanger the life of his child. When the child is about 4 or 5 months of age the parents perform ritual intercourse and medicate the child against the mystical dangers of sexual activity; sexual relations are then resumed.

834 The Yao say that a second child should not be born while the first is still being [853] suckled. Since lactation continues for about two years I am uncertain whether monogynists remain continent, as they say they do, or whether *coitus interruptus* is 464 practised. It is quite usual for husbands to become labour migrants when their 842 children are still very young. I have known women to write to their husbands who are away working and tell them to return because their children have 'grown', i.e. have been weaned. Labour recruiters had difficulty in recruiting men immediately after the soldiers had been demobilized at the end of the war, because the women objected, saying that they had remained childless long enough and the men must first wait until children were born. However, actual examination of birth-dates [163] shows that children are sometimes born within a year of one another and sometimes there are quite big gaps. The two-year gap between children is probably an ideal which few attain.

3. The Estimation of Fertility

(a) *Sundbaerg's Age Divisions*

128 As a preliminary estimate of fertility, Sundbaerg's trichotomy of ages may be considered. The argument behind this division of the population into Youth, Middle Age, and Old Age is that those populations with a high proportion of youth have a greater tendency to increase. Table V shows this trichotomy for the Yao with the same material for some other populations shown for comparison. Where the gross reproduction-rate is known for the period shown in the table, this is included.

128 At any one time a certain proportion of the population is absent from the area, 162 usually at some labour centre. Hence the proportions of the population are distributed abnormally. In all there appeared to be a total of sixty-three men, women, and children absent from the hamlets, who would otherwise have been living there. Hence in Table V these have been included in the totals in the 'Yao with absentees' proportions.

[171] [1] A disease of this sort is believed in by many Central African tribes. Among the Nyanja-speaking peoples it is known as *zunguba*.

6: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7

Table V shows that the age-distribution for the Yao sample is very similar to certain other populations commonly held to have high birth-rates. There appears to be some correlation between the proportion of youth in a population and the gross

TABLE V. *Sundbarg's Age Divisions*

Population	Year	Youth 0–15	Middle age 15–49	Old age over 50	G.R.R.
Yao*	1946	45·4	43·6	11·0	..
Yao with absentees	1946	42·6	47·4	10·0	..
Honduras†	1940	42·6	47·7	9·7	..
Nicaragua	1940	42·9	47·7	9·4	..
Guatemala	1940	43·6	46·9	9·5	..
India	1931	39·9	50·4	9·7	..
Japan	1933	36·9	47·9	15·3	1·195‡
Bulgaria	1934	34·4	48·2	15·5	1·70
Czechoslovakia	1930	26·3	54·3	19·3	1·22
New Zealand	1936	25·3	52·7	21·8	1·04
Denmark	1940	24·0	54·1	22·0	1·08
Sweden	1940	22·4	54·8	24·6	0·89

* There were 45 in the sample whose ages were not known. These were all adults and have been included proportionately in the two adult groups.

† All data for other populations taken from *The League of Nations Statistical Yearbook 1940/44*.

‡ Interpolated between 1930 (1·195) and 1937 (1·145).

reproduction-rate. Judging from the material presented in Table V a high gross reproduction-rate may be expected among the Yao where the proportion of youth is much higher than in the case of those whose gross reproduction-rates are quoted.

(b) The Proportion of Children under 5 to Women 15–50

Fertility may be judged more accurately than by this trichotomy by considering the proportion of children under 5 to the total number of women between the ages of 15 to 50, i.e. the fertility ratio.[1] In the whole sample there were 147 children under 5 and 192 women between the ages of 15 to 50. This is a ratio of 766 children per 1,000 women. However, women who are going away from the area for a long time, as, for example, wives of men who are going with their husbands to some labour centre, possibly in South Africa or Southern Rhodesia, usually leave their weaned children with their matrilineal relatives. This means that the ratio quoted (766 per 1,000) is, in reality, an over-estimate of the true ratio. In order to arrive at a nearer estimate of the ratio we must consider the children actually born to women in the sample. Table VI classifies all children both dead and surviving born to women between the ages 15 to 55. From this table we adduce that there were 191 women between the ages 15 to 50 (for whom details were available), and among them they had 141 surviving children under the age of 5. This is a fertility ratio of 738 per 1,000 women. Table VII shows the fertility ratio for 18 countries with their gross reproduction-rate for the same period as the fertility ratio.

[1] It is more usual to take the number of women between 15 and 44, though recently the age-group between 20 and 44 has been used. I have taken the age-limits 15 to 50 because of the early age of marriage, and because it appeared that the average age of cessation of child-bearing is about 50 (see Table VIII). For a discussion of the suitability of this measure of fertility where birth registration is not practised, see T. Lynn Smith, *Population Analysis*, McGraw Hill Book Co., New York (1948), p. 156.

6: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7

AN ESTIMATE OF FERTILITY IN SOME YAO HAMLETS IN

TABLE VI. *Live-born Children, Alive or Dead at Time of Survey. Mothers aged 15 to 55*

Age of mothers at time of survey	Mothers	Alive or dead	Number of years elapsed since birth of child: 12-13 ♂ ♀	10-11 ♂ ♀	8-9 ♂ ♀	6-7 ♂ ♀	4-5 ♂ ♀	2-3 ♂ ♀	1-2 ♂ ♀	0-1 ♂ ♀	Totals ♂ ♀
50-54	8	A	.. 1	0 0	.. 4	3 6	6 6	1 1	0 0	.. 0	14 18
		D	.. ..	.. ..	1 1	1 4	.. 1	.. ..	0 0	.. ..	3 7
45-49	9	A	.. ..	0 ..	4 3	3 1	6 4	1 3	3 0	0 ..	17 17
		D	.. ..	.. ..	1 ..	3 1	1 1	.. 1	.. ..	.. ..	7 3
40-44	22	A	.. ..	.. 1	4 4	9 7	10 11	4 3	0 0	1 1	49 47
		D	.. ..	.. ..	1 0	0 0	1 3	0 ..	.. ..	0 0	2 3
35-39	18	A	.. ..	.. ..	.. 1	3 3	3 6	4 3	7 10	6 8	46 32
		D	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1 1	.. 3	.. 1	1 ..	1 1	3
30-34	29	A	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	4 7	8 8	8 13	16 9	36 38
		D	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1 2	3 1	0 ..	6 3
25-29	31	A	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	3 1	3 10	23 19	21 32	50 63
		D	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1 3	4 1	4 1	7 5
20-24	28	A	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. 1	3 0	11 17	16 20
		D	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1 0	1 1	2 1
15-19	34	A	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. 0	3 3	3 6
		D	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	0 0	1 1	1 1
13-14	11	A	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
		D	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1 ..	1 ..
Totals	200	A	.. 1	0 0	8 13	17 17	28 33	13 33	36 63	66 77	204 240
		D	.. ..	.. ..	3 3	6 8	2 10	4 7	8 4	11 1	37 37

* Excludes one woman whose children were not in the hamlet so that their ages could not be determined.

TABLE VII. *Fertility Ratios and Gross Reproduction-rates for Eighteen Countries**

Country	Year	Fertility ratio†	G.R.R.
(Yao)	(1946)	(758)	..
Japan	1930	1374	0·90
Chile	1930-2	1348	0·86
Bulgaria	1934-5	1477	1·70
Poland	1931-2	1482	1·71
Union of S.A.	1941	1403	1·68
Portugal	1940-2	1416	1·34
Italy	1933-7	1400	1·45
Canada	1941	1377	1·38
Czechoslovakia	1930	1361	1·33
Australia	1933	1357	1·23
Norway	1930-2	1352	1·23
Finland	1930-2	1352	1·22
Denmark	1940	1352	1·08
France	1936	1319	1·00
New Zealand	1936	1299	1·04
U.S.A.	1940	1285	1·03
Switzerland	1941	1279	1·08
Sweden	1940	1273	0·90

* From *The League of Nations Statistical Yearbook 1941/42*. Only those countries which showed gross reproduction-rates based on direct census data and in which suitable age-groupings were used.

† I have used the age-ratios 15-50 in these calculations.

[128]

643 and determine petty native cases was conferred
622 upon the headmen, though the District Commis-
175 sioner was supposed to seek their advice when
648 necessary.

Therefore, from the time of conquest a pattern of superordination of the Whites and subordination of the Africans was established and the indigenous political system remained largely without official recognition until the Native Authorities Ordinance was passed in 1933. The major change wrought by this Ordinance was that Native Courts were planned and instituted by the Native Courts Ordinance of the same year. At the same time a Native Treasury was founded.

IV. The Present Position

643 wings to Portuguese East Africa. They were
175 allowed to return later and they took up their
648 positions in an area roughly outlined in the early
131 part of this paper. At the same time, owing to military action by the Portuguese a certain number of refugees were crossing the border into the Lake Chiuta area of Nyasaland.

TABLE I

Demographic Composition of Political Areas[1]

Sub. Area	Tot. Pop.	Admin. Hdqtrs.	Av. Pop. of Admin. Hdqtrs.	Tribal Composition
N.A. Kawinga (Yao)	23,087	311	74	
S.N.A. Ganiza (Yao)	5,119	61	84	72 20 7 1
S.N.A. Mpeta (Yao)	4,411	60	74	49 19 32 —
S.N.A. Chiwale (Yao)	2,202	19	116	80 15 5 —
S.N.A. Ngolowe (Mponda)	2,868	21	136	16 43 40 1
S.N.A. Chikowa (Mponda)	7,102	49	145	28 56 16 —
N.A. Liwonde (Yao)[2]	12,714	106	120	79 20 1 —
N.A. Nyambi (Yao)[2]	7,335	63[3]	116	77 27 — —

● 162 643 631 [563]

Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7
[P. 199 C]

643
162
631

Abstracted from crude returns of 1941 census. District Commissioner's Offices at Zomba and Fort Johnston.
Census data for a newly created B.N.A., Dowa, not recorded separately.
Approximations only. Number of Administrative villages not ascertained.
N.A. = Native Authority; B.N.A. = Subordinate Native Authority.

8:Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949
[P.150A]
FT7 Yao FT7

	Total Pop.	Area sq. m.	Density per sq. m.
Kawinga	44,789	682	65·5
Liwonde	12,716	396	32·0
Nyumbi	7,333	140	52·5

The Table I summarizes the present demographic position in the areas. The greater part of the area under study is divided between the Native Authorities Kawinga and Liwonde who call each other "brother". Kawinga as well as being a Native Authority with jurisdiction over five subordinate native authorities, is a chief over a certain number of villages in the same way as his subordinate native authorities are. These subordinate native authorities under Kawinga are:

1. *S.N.A. Cauka*, who is a matrilineal descendant of the first Kawinga's son and who still calls the present Kawinga "father", is in charge of an area along the south side of Mount Cikala;

2. *S.N.A. Mpasa* is a matrilineal descendant of the son of the first Liwonde and therefore calls both Kawinga and Liwonde "father" (atati). His area lies near Lake Chilwa and contains a high proportion of the original Nyanja peoples of the area;

3. *S.N.A. Ciwalo's* area adjoins that of N. A. Nyumbi at the north of Kawinga's sub-district. Ciwalo was a sister's son to one of the previous Kawinga's and his mother's brother had succeeded, illegally in the opinion of some, to the name of Kawinga V (see p. 147). Ciwalo succeeded to his mother's brother's name that he had before he took the name of Kawinga V. The present Kawinga VI who was known as Mbuga before he succeeded must call Ciwalo "my elder brother" (*akulumunga*);

4. *S.N.A. Ngukwe* and 5. *S.N.A. Cikuwo* are, as the Table shows, not Yao but Mpotola who are a people from Portuguese East Africa. The Mpotola have lost whatever language they had in the past and now speak Yao and so far as I could see follow Yao usage and custom. The areas under the jurisdiction of these S.N.A's lie along the north-east boundary of Kawinga's area adjoining the Portuguese territory. The Table also shows